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PRRC emerging trends

© Published by the Princeton Religion Research Center Vol. 1, No. 8

oct. 79

AN APPRAISAL BY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

A POSITIVE REACTION TO POPE'S VISIT

By George Gallup

PRINCETON, NJ – Pope John Paul II has received one of the highest ratings for personal popularity of any individual tested in the 28 years measurements have been made by the Gallup Poll.

One appraisal of the success of the Pope's recent visit to the U.S. can be found in first returns from a survey completed the Sunday his tour ended. In this survey, 60 percent of the public gave John Paul II a "highly favorable" rating, topping the 48 percent figure recorded in mid-September, prior to the Pontiff's visit. His overall favorable rating was 80 percent before the trip began and 86 percent at its conclusion.

COMPARISONS IN THE PAST

John Paul II's popularity ratings are exceeded only by those accorded Presidents Dwight Eisenhower and John Kennedy at the peak of their political careers. In January 1957, shortly after he was elected to his second term, Eisenhower was given a highly favorable rating by 72 percent of the public. President Kennedy earned the same accolade from 62 percent of Americans in January 1962. Overall favorable ratings for the two men were 90 and 89 percent, respectively.

By way of comparison with recently-rated personalities, Sen. Edward Kennedy and President Jimmy Carter earned highly favorable ratings of 39 and 20 percent from the public in the mid-September survey.

Highly favorable ratings include the top two positions (plus fives and plus fours) on a 10-point attitude scale, while overall favorable ratings include all the positive positions on the scale.

IMPACT OF POPE'S VISIT ANALYZED

In a companion survey question, the Gallup Poll also sought to determine what, in the eyes of the public, John Paul II's visit will achieve.

The survey findings indicate that the overriding message the Pope left with the American people is one of *unity* – a spirit of "drawing together" that embraces not only Roman Catholics but Americans of other religious persuasions and includes people who have no religious convictions at all. The public's reaction to the Pope's visit also suggests that he created an immense aura of goodwill and understanding among the people of the United States.

Other specific themes that were frequently voiced by survey respondents include the following:

* That the Pope advanced the cause of *world peace;*
* That he created a new *awareness of religion* or reawakened people's interest in religious ideas;
* That he gave new *hope and faith* to the people;
* That John Paul II exhibited moral and leadership *qualities that serve as a role model,* to be emulated by many;
* That his example will be particularly effective in building faith in *young people* throughout the nation.

In addition to these specific attitudes, a recurring undertone in the public's assessment of the Pope's U.S. tour is that it was, in general terms, good for the American people and that watching him simply made people feel good.

There were some negative perceptions of what the Pope's visit accomplished, with most of those so inclined saying his speeches and sermons achieved nothing. There was also isolated criticism of his visit as a violation of the constitutional separation of church and state.

Surprisingly, few survey participants expressed disappointment with the Pope's reaffirmation of his church's orthodox views on birth control, celibacy for priests, and denial of the priesthood for women.

Here is a sampling of comments that illustrate the public's attitudes toward the Pope and the legacy of his U.S. tour.

"It caused a peaceful feeling among people and will cause them to think about helping one another." - 52 year-old housewife from Springfield, NJ.

"He'll cause politicians to give serious thought to human rights." - 46 year-old businessman from Blue Earth, MN.

"His visit will encourage people to get along despite their differences. People of all religions will learn to live in peace." - 59 year-old manager from Frontenac, MO.

And on the negative side:

"(His visit will achieve) nothing. I don't think any religious occasion will influence the internal affairs of the U.S." - 34 year-old male lawyer from South Bend, IN.

"It's a big publicity stunt for the Catholic church." - 25 year-old student from Daytona Beach, FL.

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Grace Before Meals Remains A Family Tradition

Over the past 17 years the religious observance of saying grace before meals has been on a decline. However, a majority of American families still observe this religious practice. A national Gallup Poll conducted in 1962 indicated that a large majority (69 percent) of families followed this practice when the family was gathered together for meals. Only 31 percent said they did not say grace before meals.

Comparison of the 1962 study with a similar survey conducted this year shows that a shift away from grace before meals has occurred. However, the poll disclosed that 57 percent of the nation still says grace before meals, while 43 percent do not.

This survey of the nation's adult population portrays some other interesting dimensions of this religious family tradition.

Interestingly, grace is said before meals more frequently in households where the family members are less educated. Of the respondents with only a grade school education, 72% reported that grace was said before meals in their households, whereas only 54% of those with a college education reported the presence of this religious tradition in their household. Fifty-five percent of those with a high school education reported in the affirmative.

It is noteworthy that grace is much more likely to be said in non-white households than in white households. A full 82 percent of the non-white respondents reported that grace was said before meals in their homes whereas only 53 percent of the whites reported the existence of this tradition in their homes.

Again, 68 percent of those surveyed from the south responded that grace was said in their households before meals, whereas only 49 percent of those from the east stated that grace was said in their households. Respondents from the midwest and west fell in between with 56 percent of the former and 54 percent of the latter reporting the existence of the practice in their households.

The older the respondent the more likely they were to report that grace was said among family members. Sixty-five percent of those respondents 50 years and older reported that grace is said in their homes whereas only 42 percent of those between the ages of 18 and 24 reported that this religious tradition was practiced in their households. One half of those surveyed between the ages of 25 and 29 reported that grace is said in their homes while 59 percent of respondents between 30 and 49 years of age reported in the affirmative.

Grace is said in 75 percent of households where the income is under $3,000 a year. In contrast, only 56 percent of the respondents whose income is $20,000 and over say grace in their homes.

While 63 percent of Protestants reported that grace is said in their homes only 52 percent of Catholics reported so.

Further, respondents from small towns answered more often that grace was said in their households than those from larger cities.

Question: "At your family meals at home, does anyone say grace or give thanks to God aloud before meals?"

NATIONAL	57%
SEX	
Male	53
Female	60
RACE	
White	53
Non-white	82
EDUCATION	
College	54
High school	55
Grade school	72
REGION	
East	49
Midwest	56
South	68
West	54
AGE	
Total under 30	45
18-24 years	42
25-29 years	50
30-49 years	59
50 & older	65
INCOME	
$20,000 & over	56
$15,500-$19,999	56
$10,000-$14,999	50
$ 7,000-$9,999	57
$ 5,000-$6,999	60
$ 3,000-$4,999	63
Under $3,000	75
RELIGION	
Protestant	63
Catholic	52
CITY SIZE	
1,000,000 & over	47
500,000-999,999	54
50,000-499,999	54
2,500-49,999	72
Under 2,500 Rural	60

IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION IN PERSONAL LIFE

Question: How important would you say religion is in your own life – would you say very important, fairly important, or not very important?

	Very Important	Fairly Important	Not very Important
1952	75%	20%	5%
1965	71	22	7
1978	53	33	14

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE

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READER'S RESPONSE COLUMN

The editors of *Emerging Trends* invite you, the reader, to send us your suggestions about special areas you would like to see surveyed. We would also welcome your observations of items that have already appeared in *Emerging Trends*.

A Conclusion To The Episcopal Prayer Book Controversy

LAITY AND CLERGY DISAGREE

A substantial majority of the nation's Episcopal laity, polled prior to the 1979 General Convention of the Episcopal Church in Denver, wished to authorize the continued use of the 1928 Book of Common Prayer.

Those favoring such action outweighed those opposing it by a one-sided seven-to-one margin, 71 percent to 10 percent, with 19 percent undecided.

In sharp contrast, however, the nation's Episcopal clergy expressed opposition to the authorization of the 1928 Prayer Book. Sixty percent of the clergy opposed authorization while 34% were in favor.

"If such action is necessary do you think the 1979 General Convention should or should not authorize the continued use of the text of the 1928 Book?"

EPISCOPAL CLERGY

	Yes	No	No Opinion
Total Clergy	34%	60%	6%
Conservative	42	54	4
Middle-of-the-road	34	59	7
Liberal	21	70	9

EPISCOPAL LAITY

	Yes	No	No Opinion
Total Laity	71%	10%	19%
Total members	74	11	15
Active	76	12	12
Inactive	70	9	21
Total non-members	55	5	40

PERSONAL PREFERENCES

The personal preference of the laity for the earlier book over the 1976 book was 63 to 23 percent.

Again, in sharp contrast, 80 percent of the clergy stated that they personally prefer the 1976 book, compared to 14 percent who favor the 1928 book.

While the clergy overwhelmingly stated a personal preference for the 1976 book and oppose the authorization of the continued use of the 1928 book, two-thirds of the clergy (66 percent) said it would not make any difference to them if other congregations in their locality continued to use the prayer book they are not using.

In addition, nine in 10 (89 percent) of the laity, regardless of the book they themselves prefer, think fellow Episcopalians who prefer the other book should be allowed to use it.

USE OF BOOKS IN PARISHES

Roughly half the clergy interviewed reported that the 1928 book was not used at all in their services. The responses of the laity confirm this. Therefore, this survey shows that while the laity expressed preference for the 1928 book, its use is actually limited.

REASONS FOR FAVORING EACH BOOK

The reasons given by both laity and clergy for preferring the 1928 book are similar: "familiarity", "beauty of language" and "tradition" (plus "theology" in the case of clergy favoring the 1928 book).

Among the laity who prefer the 1976 book the chief reasons given are "contemporary expression" and "improved language".

Interestingly, clergy who expressed preference for the 1976 book emphasized practical reasons for their choice rather than reasons related to the language of the proposed new book: "variety", "better liturgically" and "congregational participation".

RESOLUTION

The General Convention of the Episcopal Church gave its final approval to a 1976 revision of the liturgy. The 1928 book, however, "may be used in worship under the authority of the Bishop as chief pastor and liturgical officer and subject to the directions of the Convention," as follows: 1) continuing study of the 1979 Prayer Book; 2) the formation of a worship committee; 3) individual participation in liturgy to be encouraged; 4) familiarization of congregation with the music of the 1979 Prayer Book; 5) the Calendar and Lectionaries of the 1979 Book be used; 6) the 1979 Book be available for study and worship; 7) and frequent use of the 1979 Book.

PERSONAL PREFERENCE

"What is your OWN personal preference – the 1928 Book or the 1976 Book?"

EPISCOPAL LAITY

	1928	1976	Both	No Opinion
Total Laity	63%	23%	7%	7%
Total members	63	26	7	4
Active	56	31	9	4
Inactive	77	16	4	3
Total non-members	60	7	3	30

EPISCOPAL CLERGY

	1928	1976	Both	No Opinion
Total Clergy	14%	80%	6%	*
Conservative	22	71	7	*
Middle-of-the-road	12	82	6	*
Liberal	5	89	6	*

* Less than one percent

THE POPE'S VISIT,

continued from page 1

The following question was asked:

"You will notice that the boxes on this card go from the HIGHEST POSITION OF PLUS 5 – for someone you like very much – all the way down to the LOWEST POSITION OF MINUS 5 – for someone you dislike very much. How far up the scale or how far down the scale would you rate Pope John Paul II?"

The results reported here are based on in-person interviews of adults, 18 and older, during the period October 5-7.

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NOTE

For an in-depth analysis of what Catholics seek in the Pope, their religious beliefs, attitudes and practices, see our complete report in *Religion in America 1979-80* $20 per copy. Order by writing to Publications Department, PO Box 5, Hopewell, NJ 08525 or call 609-466-2700.

COMING IN NEXT ISSUE

- **A HAPPINESS RATING**

  Do people consider themselves basically happy or unhappy with their lives? Do those people who consider themselves most happy believe prayer is effective?

- **INFLUENCE OF COLLEGE COURSES**

  Which subjects studied in college have had the largest impact on college students?

The Effectiveness of Prayer

In a recent national Gallup Survey the public was polled about its perceptions and beliefs regarding the effect of prayer. The questions were posed as follows: "It has been said that those who pray will receive help. Do you think this is a true statement or not?" and "When you have prayed for help, what happened, did it work or not?"

Interestingly, the poll revealed that a substantial majority (71%) of all those interviewed believe that those who pray will receive help. About six out of 10 (63%) reported that when they have prayed for help, their prayers had been answered.

Women respondents believe in prayer to a greater extent than do men. Seventy-five percent of the women polled said those who prayed would receive help from their prayers, whereas only 68 percent of the men hold such beliefs. Furthermore, 70 percent of the women stated that when they prayed for help, it did work, whereas only 55 percent of the men responded in this way.

The age of respondents was also a factor. As the age of respondents increased, so did their belief in the effectiveness of prayer. Those who are 35 years of age or older believe in prayer to a greater extent than do young adults (those between 18 and 34 years of age).

Surprisingly, college graduates hold to the effectiveness of prayer to almost the same extent as do those with less formal education. Also, family income does not significantly affect the beliefs of respondents with regard to prayer.

Question:	Will those who pray receive help?	When you prayed for help did it work?
	Percent "Yes"	Percent who say "It worked"
All Adults	71%	63%
Sex of Respondent		
Men	68	55
Women	75	70
Age of Respondent		
18-34 years	65	55
35-49 years	74	64
50 years & older	76	71
Education of Respondent		
College Graduates	72	61
All others	71	64
Annual Family Income		
$15,000 or more	71	62
Under $15,000	72	64

EMERGING TRENDS is published monthly except July and August by the PRINCETON RELIGION RESEARCH CENTER. The Center, founded in 1977, is an inter-faith, non-denominational research organization with headquarters in Princeton, N.J. The PRRC specializes in creative, actionable research, utilizing the worldwide attitudinal and behavioral facilities of Gallup International. The purpose of the PRRC is to gain a better understanding of the nature and depth of religious commitment in the U.S. and abroad and to explore ways this information can enable religious leaders to promote spiritual growth. A one year subscription can be obtained for $20; inquire: Publications Department, P.O. Box 5, Hopewell, NJ 08525 (Telephone: 609-466-2700). **PLEASE NOTIFY US OF ADDRESS CHANGE.**